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55 Food Additives to be Removed from Approved List

Report Categories:

Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

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Report Highlights:

The Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare, began a review of food additives approved in Japan in spring 2010 to identify older substances no longer in use. MHLW has identified 55 additives that will be removed from the “Existing Food Additive List” beginning May 18, 2011.

General Information:

The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare (MHLW) will withdraw a number of substances from its List of Existing Food Additives [1], thereby prohibiting their use as additives in Japan. This activity targets food additives that can be determined to no longer be in distribution.

Article 2-3 of the Supplementary Provisions of Law No.101 of 1995 (Law to Partially Revise the Food Sanitation Law and Nutrition Improvement Law [2]) authorizes the Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare to withdraw food additives from the List of Existing Food Additives (Ministry of Health and Welfare Announcement No. 120, 1996) if the Minister determines that these food additives, or preparations or foods containing them are no longer marketed, sold, manufactured, imported, processed, used, stored, or displayed in Japan. Prior to withdrawal, the Minister is required to publish a list of food additives for withdrawal and seek public comments on the proposal. Following this directive, a total of 70 additives have been previously withdrawn from the list.

In the spring of 2010, MHLW released a list of 125 food additives proposed for withdrawal. Following a domestic comment period, MHLW reduced that list to 80 additives. Subsequently, in May 2010, opened another six-month public comment period to receive feedback on the proposal. Following review of comments from foreign governments and international and domestic industry, MHLW presented a final report to the Food Safety Commission's Committee on Food Additives recommending the removal of 55 additives that MHLW had determined were no longer in distribution in Japan. The committee report is outlined below.

Outline of the Report

On May 18, 2010, MHLW published a (reduced) list of 80 food additives for withdrawal and initiated a six-month public comment period to receive feedback concerning the proposal. MHLW notified the WTO of the proposal (G/SPS/N/JPN/255) on July 1, 2010 and began accepting public comments. After review of these comments, 25 additional substances out of 80 proposed for withdrawal were removed from the list. However, once this proposal is enforced the remaining 55 additives scheduled for withdrawal (see Attachment) will be no longer approved for use in Japan.

Please note that once substances are withdrawn from the List of Existing Food Additives, they will not be allowed for use specifically as food additives though they will continue to remain authorized for use as ingredients in foods.

In addition, two of these substances scheduled for withdrawal will still be allowed for use as an additive under the following conditions: 1) Sphingolipid cannot be specifically derived from bovine brain; and 2) Tannin (extract) cannot be derived from chestnut astringent skins or tamarind seed coats.

[1] "Existing food additives" refers to non-synthetic food additives that were marketed or used on the date of amendment to the Food Sanitation Law (May 24, 1995) and that appear in the List of Existing Food Additives.

[2] The Nutrition Improvement Law is presently known as the Health Promotion Law.

Next action

These 55 substances will be withdrawn by May 2011.

Timeline

May 18, 2010; Published the list of food additives for withdrawal

- Six month public comment period and WTO notification

November 17, 2010; comment period closed.

- Review of comments received

No later than May 18, 2011; The List of Existing Food Additives will be revised and enforced

List of Food Additives to be withdrawn

The table below contains GOJ-MHLW's final list of substances for withdrawal. The initial list for withdrawal contained 125 substances, and was subsequently reduced to 80 substances after the domestic comment. On July 1, 2011, GOJ notified the WTO-SPS committee of the proposed action.

No	Substance No.	Substance Name	Remarks
1	011	N-Acetylglucosamine	
2	021	Arabino-galactan	
3	023	Alkanet colour	
4	028	Aloe vera extract	
5	037	Sweet potato carotene	
6	044	Japanese styrax benzoin extract	
7	046	Ellagic acid	
8	049	Krill colour	
9	052	Oligo-N-acetylglucosamine	
10	054	Oligoglucosamine	
11	061	Cacao carbon black	
12	065	Gastric mucin	
13	070	atechin	
14	072	Crayfish colour	
15	094	Aloe extract	
16	100	Phellodendron bark extract	
17	113	Gutta-percha	
18	116	Green tuff	
19	133	Mulberry bark extract	

2-0	136	Gentian root extract	
2 1	140	Enzymatically modified licorice extract	
2 2	141	Enzymatically modified tea extract	
2 3	147	Enzymatically hydrolyzed coix extract	
2 4	155	Copal resin	
2 5	156	Cobalt	
2-6	160	Resin of depolymerized natural rubber	
2-7	162	Enzymatically decomposed rice bran	
2 8	165	Bamboo grass colour	
2-9	166	Cane wax	
3 0	171	Sandarac resin	
3 1	180	Shikon colour [Lithospermum root colour]	
3-2	185	Jamaica quassia extract	
3-3	187	Calcinated calcium	Only products from sea urchin shells
3 4	193	Sclero gum [Scleroglucan]	
3 5	197	Sphingolipid	Only products from bovine brains
3 6	203	Sesamolin	
3 7	205	Sesbania gum	
3-8	212	Sorva [Leche caspi]	
3-9	213	Sorvinha	
4 0	214	L-Sorbose	
4 1	226	Tannin (extract)	Only products from chestnut astringent skins or tamarind seed coats
4 2	227	Dammar resin	
4 3	231	Tea seed saponin	
4-4	233	Chilte	
4-5	235	Tunu	
4-6	238	Depolymerized natural rubber	
4 7	244	Tourmaline	
4-8	248	Cholesterol	
4 9	249	Dokudami extract	
5 0	258	Triacylglycerol lipase	
5 1	268	Quassia extract	
5-2	269	Niger gutta	
5-3	270	Absinth extract	
5 4	271	Nystose	
5 5	273	Olibanum	

5 6	275	Garlic extract	
5 7	281	Paffia extract	
5 8	288	Isodonis extract	
5 9	295	Himematsutake extract	
6 0	296	Pimento extract	
6 1	331	Hesperetin	
6 2	335	Powdered annatto	
6 3	338	Venezuelan chicle	
6 4	339	Pepper extract	
6 5	348	Garden balsam extract	
6 6	349	Hokosshi extract	
6 7	359	Massaranduba chocolate	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 8	360	Massaranduba balata	
6 9	372	Methylthioadenosine	
7 0	377	Mousouchiku charcoal extract	
7 1	385	Morin	
7 2	386	Montan wax	
7 3	388	Vegetable oil soot colour	
7 4	389	Eucalyptus leaf extract	
7 5	405	Lintar cellulose	
7 6	410	Leche de vaca	
7 7	411	Levan	
7 8	412	Lemon peel extract	
7 9	416	Residinha	
8 0	419	Wasabi extract	